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there is neither index, table of contents, nor heads of chapters to guide him through the chaos, and lighten his journey on the way. A work of history, embracing a complicated mass and variety of facts, without any means of reference, is little better than a clock without the minute and hour hands, or a dial plate without a gnomon.

It is commonly the object of a writer to have his book read; and to send it out in so repulsive a shape, as to drive every one from its pages, who values his time or his comfort, indicates, to say the least, a singular defect of judgment, and ignorance of the feasible modes of accomplishing a purpose.

But after this censure of the author's negligence, and the unfavorable exhibition of his book-making skill, it gives us pleasure to commend the industry and zeal, with which he has accumulated a series of valuable facts respecting the history of the country northwest of the Ohio river. As General Harrison went into that country nearly thirty years ago, and held from the beginning important public stations, a narrative of the principal events of his life embraces the leading features of the history of the first settlement, and succeeding growth, of the three states north of the Ohio. The early treaties with the Indians, the purchase and cession of their lands from time to time, the frequent wars, surveys and sales of public lands, local political events, and the particulars of the last war in that quarter, are all described with sufficient minuteness, and with a reference to authorities, which leaves no doubt of the author's general accuracy. As he writes professedly to defend General Harrison, however, he occasionally manifests a warmth not entirely consistent with the strict impartiality of a historian. By those who desire to be informed on the above subjects, his book will be valued as a repository of authentic documents, and as containing a summary of facts not to be derived from any other single source.

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- 11.—*Remarks on the projected Revision of the Laws of New York, first published in the Atlantic Magazine for April 1825.*  
8vo. pp. 19. New York.

THE laws of New York, like those of most other States in the Union, are drawn from numerous and very different sources. Their *substratum*, of course, is the common law of England. To this we must add, in the first place, the provisions growing out of the federal compact, to wit, the constitution, the acts of Congress, and the decisions of the federal courts. Next come the constitu-

tion, legislative acts, and judicial decisions of New York. Lastly, there are undoubtedly in that state, as in other parts of the country, many rules of local origin, arising out of the manners, laws, and exigencies of the early settlers, which are now more or less ascertained by statute, or by adjudications, and which may be styled the common law of the State.

It is easy to perceive, from this plain statement, how complex must be the existing laws, and how far from being that simple and intelligible rule of conduct, which theory requires they should be, if it were possible to attain the object. The evil is enhanced by the facility of legislating amongst us, which introduces so many ill-digested statutes into all the American codes, and the consequence of which is, that revised editions of the statutes are continually becoming necessary from time to time. The pamphlet before us relates to such a revision of the laws of New York. We shall merely state the facts disclosed in it, without entering into any discussion of the several questions, which are briefly considered by the writer.

The statutes of New York have been repeatedly revised at successive periods, the last of which was in 1813. The revisers were authorized to proceed no further than reducing to proper heads all the public laws of a permanent nature, adding marginal notes, omitting obsolete acts, correcting occasionally slight inaccuracies of language, and in a word performing duties purely *editorial*. After the recent changes in the constitution of the State, a new revision of the statutes was deemed necessary, and in November, 1824, an act for that purpose was passed, by which Erastus Root, Benjamin Butler, and James Kent, were appointed Commissioners to prepare a revised edition of the statutes, wherein, by reason of the provisions of the new constitution, or of statutes enacted under it, such alterations were become requisite. For reasons which it is not necessary to enumerate in this place, the ex-chancellor declined accepting the appointment, and John Duer was appointed in his stead.

At the late spring session of the legislature of New York, the subject of the proposed revision of the statutes was again resumed. An act was passed enlarging the authority of the commissioners in the premises, to an extent, which the author of the pamphlet before us deems unsafe and inexpedient. Erastus Root resigned his office, and Henry Wheaton was named to succeed him. The commission now consists of men, in whom the state may repose confidence, and therefore we do not think any attempt at rash innovation is to be feared at their hands. Our design, however, being only to give a succinct account of the facts, so far as they bear upon the judicial history of the country, we stop here,

abstaining from any more extended comments on the subject, and referring our readers to the pamphlet itself, if they wish to form an opinion of the points in controversy.

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- 12.—*American Entomology, or Descriptions of the Insects of North America ; illustrated by Coloured Figures from Original Drawings executed from Nature.* By THOMAS SAY. Philadelphia Museum. Published by S. A. Mitchell. William Brown, Printer. 1824. 8vo.

For beauty and elegance of execution, this work surpasses any other that has been printed in this country. The letter-press of Wilson's Ornithology, and of the famous edition of the Columbiad, is executed in a more finished style ; but in the exquisite delicacy of the drawings and beauty of the engravings, as well as in the marks of taste indicated in the external attractions of the volume, the American Entomology is much superior to either of them. The fanciful and highly emblematical frontispiece was delineated by C. A. Le Sueur ; the figures of the insects were drawn from nature by T. R. Peale, and engraved by C. Tiebout. The specimens of their labours here furnished are in the highest degree creditable to these artists. The work, as it has come from their hands, affords a most encouraging testimony of the state of the arts in this country, and as such deserves the patronage not more of the lovers of science, than of all persons who are disposed to advance the progress of liberal pursuits, by rewarding the successful efforts of genius and skill.

Of the scientific merits of the work it does not become us to speak. And, indeed, in the present instance there is happily no occasion for eulogy from us, or from any other quarter, to inspire a perfect confidence in the profound researches and knowledge of the author. No person, who has paid any attention to the advancement of science in this country for the last ten years, can be ignorant of the doings and movements of Mr Say, or of his particular devotedness to the subjects, of which he has treated in this volume. Of Dr Bowditch it has often been said by way of eminence, that we have *one* astronomer in America ; it may be said with the same emphasis of Mr Say, that we have *one* entomologist. He has spared no pains in his researches, and his zeal has been equal to his means of knowledge. If we mistake not, he has travelled in various parts of the Middle and Southern States purely for scientific purposes, and with the same design he accompanied Major Long's first expedition to the Rocky Mountains, and his second one to the Northwestern Ter-